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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 6 December 1990, at 3 p.m.

President:	Mr. de MARCO	(Malta)
later:	Mr. MAKKAWI (Vice-President)	(Lebanon)
later:	Mr. de MARCO (President)	(Malta)

- Policies of Apartheid of the Government of South Africa [34] (continued)
  - (a) Report of the Special Committee against Apartheid
  - (b) Report of the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa
  - (c) Report of the Commission against Apartheid in Sports
  - (d) Reports of the Secretary-General
  - (e) Report of the Special Political Committee
  - (f) Draft resolution

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90-64424/A 3771V (E)

- Question of Palestine [23] (continued)

  (a) Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

  (b) Report of the Secretary-General

  (c) Draft resolutions

READEX FICHE

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 34 (continued)

POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

(a) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID (A/45/22 and Add.1)

(b) REPORT OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP TO MONITOR THE SUPPLY AND SHIPPING OF OIL AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS TO SOUTH AFRICA (A/45/43)

(c) REPORT OF THE COMMISSION AGAINST APARTHEID IN SPORTS (A/45/45)

(d) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/45/162, A/45/539, A/45/550, A/45/637, A/45/670)

(e) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE (A/45/815)

(f) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/45/L.31)

Mr. OULD MOHAMED MAHMOUD (Mauritania) (interpretation from French): For the oppressed people of South Africa 1990 has certainly been a year full of historic events, whose results give them grounds to hope for the prompt dismantling of the apartheid system and the establishment of a non-racial and democratic South Africa.

The unanimous adoption by the General Assembly on 14 December 1989 of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa was perceived by the anti-apartheid militants as recognition of their selflessness.

The unconditional release on 11 February 1990 of Nelson Mandela, leader of the South African people's struggle, was welcomed by all peoples. It confirms a universal truth: that however long the night may be the day will inevitably dawn.

The communiqué published on 4 May 1990 after the Groote Schuur talks, the Pretoria joint declaration of 6 August and the historic initiative of the African National Congress (ANC) in deciding to suspend the armed struggle have evoked real optimism, which is strengthened by the recent decisions of the South African authorities gradually to release political prisoners, to allow the return of exiles and finally to lift the state of emergency throughout the country.

(Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud, Mauritania)

It cannot be doubted that a process that will lead to the dismantling of the apartheid system is under way. But let us not lower our guard, for the main pillars of apartheid are still standing and the legalization of political parties may prove to yield insufficient results.

While today the heroic struggle of the oppressed South African people has induced the President of South Africa to take bold steps in the right direction, it would be premature to conclude that the hydra of apartheid is dead. The facts call for more circumspection. For, despite the measures already adopted and the intentions proclaimed right and left, we are still far from having established the climate for the negotiations called for in the Harare and United Nations Declarations. Consequently, we can only be concerned over the haste shown by some States in resuming formal relations with the apartheid régime. This attitude may indeed weaken the spirit of consensus that the international community has exerted such efforts to achieve on this question.

In this context resolution 44/244, adopted during the consideration of the Secretary-General's report on progress made in the implementation of the Declaration on Apartheid shows that the responsibility for this state of affairs lies with persistence of the apartheid structures.

The Assembly's appeal to the South African authorities to take steps promptly to begin the dismantling of these structures and to ensure that the security forces act in an impartial way illustrates, if that is necessary, the international community's keen concern.

What should we say about the renewed outbreak of violence or the lack of movement for some two months now and the new obstacles placed in the path to freedom of peaceful political activity and the return of exiles? The conclusions

(Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud, Mauritania)

of the report of the Harms Commission, issued on 13 November 1990, can only increase doubts about the sincerity of the statements by South African leaders.

That is why the international community must maintain the existing sanctions and all kinds of political pressures so long as concrete and irreversible changes are not taken that lead to the eradication of the apartheid system.

Mauritania for its part has always stood side by side with the liberation movements and peace- and justice-loving peoples. It reaffirms its full support for the legitimate struggle of the South African people for the total elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a free, united and democratic South Africa.

In this regard, I pay a tribute to the memory of Zaphania Mothopeng, the freedom-fighter, who died on 23 October in Johannesburg. To the South African people and to his comrades in the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) we express our sincere condolences.

I cannot conclude without paying a well-deserved tribute to the tireless efforts of the Special Committee against Apartheid and its distinguished Chairman, the Ambassador of Nigeria, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, who by his vigilance and commitment has mobilized international opinion against the crimes committed by this anachronistic, heinous system. Once again we offer our support to the members of that Committee.

Mr. MAVROMMATIS (Cyprus): This year's session of the General Assembly has been convened against a backdrop of important developments in the international political arena. To quote from the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization:

(Mr. Mavrommatis, Cyprus)

"The period we have entered is Janus-faced. It wears both the aspect of hope and the countenance of dangerous unrestraint." (A/45/1, p. 2)

The situation prevailing in South Africa is one such case in point.

At the resumed forty-fourth session of the General Assembly this September the delegation of Cyprus, in expressing its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his report on the situation and developments in South Africa, echoed the general findings of that report to the effect that, although a process was under way towards the dismantling of apartheid through negotiations and through measures taken by South Africa, other essential measures stipulated by the General Assembly in its Declaration last December remained to be fulfilled in their entirety. These include the release of all political prisoners and detainees, the end of the state of emergency throughout the country, the repeal of all regulations designed to circumscribe political activity, the removal of the troops from the townships and the cessation of all political trials and political executions.

(Mr. Mavrommatis, Cyprus)

Cyprus has always maintained an unwavering stand against apartheid. I take this opportunity to reiterate my Government's established position that apartheid, in all its forms and manifestations, should be completely and unequivocally dismantled.

There can be no doubt that with the historic transition of Namibia to independence and the release of political prisoners, especially Nelson Mandela, a significant step was taken towards reducing tensions in southern Africa that threatened global security. It is now imperative that the declared desire of Mr. De Klerk to see the total dismantling of the abhorrent policies of apartheid become a permanent reality. The Government of the Republic of Cyprus, in acknowledging the significance of the commencement of talks between the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and the South African Government, hopes that they will progress in a positive and speedy manner. The recent joint declaration of the two parties, while contributing to the establishment of an atmosphere conducive to negotiations, also aims at accelerating the political progress towards a negotiated settlement through various measures, including the release of political prisoners and the reviewing of current security legislation.

My delegation also notes the statement in the Secretary-General's report that:

"The announcement by the African National Congress of the suspension of all armed actions has also been a significant development." (A/45/1, p. 5)

My delegation takes this opportunity once again to praise the spirit of conciliation and the desire for peace displayed by the Deputy-President of the ANC, Mr. Nelson Mandela, and the black leadership, who, despite their bitter experiences of injustice and oppression, have pledged themselves to a peaceful process for the eradiction of all vestiges of the apartheid system and for replacing that system with a non-racial and democratic society.

(Mr. Mavrommatis, Cyprus)

While recognizing the course embarked upon, which my delegation sincerely hopes will be an irreversible one, one cannot fail to underscore the difficulties that remain, as well as the unforeseen dangers that lurk at every stage of development, thereby reinforcing the imperative need to be unflinching in the resolve expressed. The Secretary-General recognized as much when he stated in his aforementioned report:

> "The political process towards dismantling the apartheid system is yet at an early stage and difficulties are still caused by the continuance of apartheid structures, questionable police practices, repressive laws and politically-related violence." (A/45/1, p. 4)

These, coupled with the menacing resistance to change in certain quarters, necessitate acting in a responsible and decisive manner.

We are also concerned that, in spite of whatever positive changes have transpired, recent weeks have been marked by an increase in the incidence of violence. Notwithstanding the primary responsibility of the South African Government, in the circumstances, for maintaining law and order, all parties concerned should play their part in seeing an early termination of the spiralling cycle of violence. There can be no doubt that these incidents, which are taking on the menacing face of daily occurrences, can only hinder and jeopardize political dialogue.

The South Africa of the future, one that has as its centre-piece a non-racial democracy in which human rights for all will no longer be regarded as a luxury but as the very basis for the existence of society, requires permanent peace and unity. A precarious peace would be fraught with dangers. The need for more confidence-building measures is imperative if we are to give the goal of a united, non-racial and democratic society in South Africa a chance. We welcome all moves

(Mr. Mavrommatis, Cyprus)

by the South African Government to that end, but remain concerned that a large number of the so-called pillars of apartheid are still in place, thereby impeding progress.

The Secretary-General, in his statement at the resumed session in September 1990, stated before the General Assembly that:

> "The United Nations can claim with legitimate pride that the international consensus commanded by the Declaration on apartheid provided impetus to the process of change that has begun in South Africa. It is a consensus that has united the Assembly. It is a consensus that must be maintained. It is a consensus that must unite South Africa."
> (A/44/PV.97, p. 12)

Mr. LEGWAILA (Botswana): When the General Assembly, at its special session on apartheid, adopted the historic Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, in December last year, South Africa was in many ways a long distance from where it stands today. Mr. Nelson Mandela and his fellow prisoners-for-life were languishing in prison. They are now free. The African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) and other political organizations were banned. They are now free to operate legally. The ANC's headquarters was in Lusaka, Zambia. It is now in Johannesburg, South Africa. The armed struggle was on course and quietly but surely taking a toll, complemented by the corrosive cumulative effects of economic sanctions and other punitive measures imposed on South Africa. The ANC has suspended the armed struggle. There was a country-wide state of emergency under which the perpetration of the brutalities of apartheid was intensified. The state of emergency has been lifted in toto. In a nutshell, the South Africa of December 1989 is measurably different from the South Africa of December 1990.

(Mr. Legwaila, Botswana)

These are encouraging developments whose import for the struggle for liberation in South Africa must be acknowledged and welcomed. Apartheid has not been eradicated, but there are signs that it is slowly but surely on its way out. President De Klerk's February speech and the floodgates of unrestrained political activism it opened in South Africa; the flourishing of a nascent culture of political pluralism it has engendered; the statesmanlike approach to negotiations evinced by the South African President and the ANC's Deputy-President in their collaborative effort to clear the path for the commencement of the negotiations; the periodic issuance of minutes conveying good tidings of progress; and the steady flow of exiles returning to South Africa even for a brief visit, in the glare of television - all these developments have created a credible image of a South Africa in the throes of change.

But the mere image of a South Africa in the throes of change is not enough as a harbinger of the real change that we all seek and have always sought in South Africa. The image must have as its underpinning and propelling force a clear and unequivocal commitment to fundamental change on the part of all concerned, expressed in concrete action rather in high-sounding visionary words.

(Mr. Legwaila, Botswana)

The phase of choreographed minutes announcing progress in "talks about talks" by piece-meal instalments must give way to a real demonstration of Pretoria's seriousness of intent in its negotiations with Mr. Mandela and his colleagues. The substance, rather than the superficialities of the apartheid strucures must be dealt with - and with the heightened boldness and urgency it calls for.

Sometimes - indeed on many occasions - it looks to us as if, instead of concentrating exclusively on the removal of obstacles to the holding of full-fledged negotiations, the Government of South Africa is expending a lot of time and energy lately on a world-wide campaign to break out of isolation. The impression is that the mere image of a South Africa in the throes of change is good enough to warrant a reward for intent to change - just mere intent to change. But images and intentions are not enough. South Africa must be seen to be changing, not simply imagined to be changing. The end of isolation must be seen and understood as the ultimate reward for fundamental and irreversible change in South Africa - not the other way round.

And yet we must concede that, for the first time in the troubled history of South Africa, we may in fact be witnessing the makings - I must repeat, the makings - of a process that could be destined to become irreversible and fundamental, with careful nurturing and perseverance by all. We in southern Africa are more than certain that the victims of apartheid in South Africa are more than ready to forget the past and walk hand in hand with their white compatriots into a future of peace and freedom. Otherwise, Mr. Nelson Mandela would not have been so ready so soon after his release from prison to plunge into the crocodile-infested waters of apartheid politics in response to President De Klerk's invitation to talk peace. And he has plunged into those waters in good faith.

(Mr. Legwaila, Botswana)

But we have to understand that it takes a partnership of two to dance a tango. Only if Mr. Mandela's good faith is reciprocated by his interlocutors on the South African Government side can the momentum of change be maintained and sustained. We are worried that it is taking too long for the Government of South Africa to create conditions conducive to the commencement of negotiations - real negotiations. What seemed like rapid progress in the early weeks of the "talks about talks" seems to have been replaced by a virtual stalemate caused by disagreements - sometimes mundane disagreements - on the figures for political prisoners to be released. This is compounded by the utterly inexplicable continuation of violence in the townships, in the face of which the Government seems hopelessly paralysed.

There surely must be a better explanation for the violence than the hackneyed one which suggests that the ANC and Inkatha are simply locked up in an interminable death dance from which there is no escape. The phenomenon of the incognito death squads which methodically and brutally sow death in trains and taxi stations suggests the existence of a more sinister plot than the ANC-versus-Inkatha refrain.

The South African authorities are not known for lack of vigilance and resolve. The invisible hand behind the terrible mayhem and bloodbath we witness today in South Africa must be - and ought to have been - well known in Government circles. This invisible hand would have been chopped off a long time ago, if only the Pretorian authorities had accepted the fact, as we did a long time ago, that in this kind of atmosphere there can be no conditions conducive to the holding of full-fledged negotiations.

There is, therefore, dire need for pressure to be exerted on the Government of South Africa to clear the table for the commencement of the negotiations. The international community can do a lot in exerting such pressure, instead of

(Mr. Legwaila, Botswana)

lavishing praise so readily, even when it is not warranted. There is no time to waste. The requisite conditions to enable the people of South Africa to sit at a conference table to negotiate a mutually acceptable constitutional dispensation for their country must be created now to frustrate the temptation by the impatient on both sides of the South African conflict to despair and revert to seeking change by violent means.

There is need, too, for the victims of apartheid to realize that their moment of truth has come. A golden opportunity to wrest their tortured country from the clutches of apartheid by peaceful means has landed on their lap; it must not be wasted. The ANC has wisely reacted creatively to the opportunity to test the bona fides of the South African Government. The other parties in black South Africa must do the same. They must join the negotiations for peace and freedom to hasten the demise of apartheid. That is why we find the refusal to allow the PAC's external leaders to attend the funeral of their leader, President Mothopeng, recently extremely disturbing, and we condemn it. At this critical juncture in the tragic history of South Africa, when the Government of South Africa should be behaving more tolerantly towards its opponents to encourage a climate of reconciliation, it is simply regrettable that even South African exiles, particularly those who are to participate in the negotiations, are being treated as if they were foreign to their own homeland.

The international community must make it abundantly clear to the South African Government that the only way out of the apartheid swamp is the way forward. The international community must make it clear that pressure for change cannot be relaxed until an acceptable dispensation has been delivered - and delivered safely - to the people of South Africa.

Mr. ELIASSON (Sweden): A year ago the Assembly unanimously endorsed the historic Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. For the first time, the entire United Nations community spoke with one voice to condemn the abhorrent system of apartheid. Last December's Declaration is also an expression of our common expectation that the South African Government will speedily bring apartheid to an end, and it is a strong call for the transformation of South Africa into a united, democratic and non-racial society.

(Mr. Eliasson, Sweden)

At the resumed session in September the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 44/244, thereby reaffirming this unity of purpose.

The Nordic countries, for which I now speak, strongly hope that it will be possible at this session to continue to build on that tradition and to adopt a common position by consensus. It is important that international solidarity be continuously demonstrated in support of the negotiating process now under way.

During recent months significant and positive events have occurred in South Africa. This has further opened the prospect of profound changes now finally being within reach. The opportunity is at hand for the total and peaceful dismantling of the apartheid system.

We have seen the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners. We have seen the removal of the ban on political organizations, the lifting of the state of emergency, and the agreements that would allow the release of all political prisoners and the return of political exiles. These are important steps in the process towards negotiations on the political future of South Africa. To these positive factors should be added the suspension by the African National Congress (ANC) of its armed struggle and its commitment to peaceful negotiations.

The South African Government, for its part, has committed itself to the abolition of apartheid and to negotiations on a new constitution. One of the basic laws sustaining the apartheid system has already gone - the Separate Amenities Act. The Government has also committed itself to repealing the Land Acts and the Group Areas Act during the next parliamentary session.

These are all positive development. We should not, however, underestimate the difficulties that still lie ahead. A great deal remains to be done before apartheid is finally eradicated. Today, basic elements of apartheid are still in

(Mr. Eliasson, Sweden)

place. Discriminatory and repressive laws and practices continue to create havoc in the lives of the black majority of South Africa. A number of political trials are still in progress and political prisoners still languish in jail.

The recurring violence, especially in Natal and the townships around Johannesburg, has injected a new dimension of suffering and instability in South Africa. This could pose a threat to the negotiating process itself. The Nordic countries appeal to all parties to break the cycle of violence, stabilize the situation and solve their differences through dialogue. The South African Government has a special responsibility to bring this situation to an end in an impartial manner.

Alongside the political process now under way, the South African Government should also take urgent measures aimed at redressing the immense social and economic inequalities which exist as a result of the apartheid regulations. If these disparities are not addressed urgently and at the highest level, they can in fact endanger the present political process.

It is obvious that there is still a long and arduous road to travel before we reach the stage where all South Africans can live by the very principles set out in our Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Nordic countries will continue to follow closely developments in South Africa. We will continue to promote dialogue and the process of democratization in South Africa. We are convinced that the positive steps so far taken by the South African Government have been brought about by internal as well as external pressure. It is therefore, for our part, important to keep up the international pressure to bring about peaceful change in South Africa.

(Mr. Eliasson, Sweden)

The policy of the Nordic countries towards South Africa remains based on the central elements of the 1988 Nordic Programme of Action. We will maintain the pressure, including economic sanctions, until there is clear evidence of profound and irreversible changes in South Africa.

Let me in closing say that there is no acceptable half-way solution; there is no acceptable compromise on apartheid. South Africa must free itself from this scourge. All its inhabitants must be liberated from the violence, the suffering, the fear and the human degradation which apartheid policies impose.

The American playwright Arthur Miller is quoted in The New York Times today as saying that apartheid, basically, is a question of denial. I find this completely correct. Apartheid is in fact a monumental denial of human dignity. Therefore, the quest for a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa is a shared responsibility. We must all support the people of South Africa in this endeavour. Let us never forget that those that actively oppose apartheid are defending the very principle and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. It is a noble and vital cause in the interest of all of us.

Mr. MOORE (United States of America): The United States has long held the conviction that apartheid must be dismantled and that human injustice in South Africa can be redressed only through the adoption of a system of genuine, non-racial democracy. Therefore the current debate on apartheid in this forum is an extremely important one. At the outset I should like to state that the United States remains committed to seeking all appropriate means to hasten the end of apartheid.

I should like to begin by restating several points that the United States believes are critical to any discussion of apartheid and South Africa. The first is that an encouraging process of peaceful change and negotiation has emerged in

(Mr. Moore, United States)

South Africa during the past year. It continues to make remarkable progress. Leading political prisoners were released; political organizations that had been banned for years were legalized and are now free to conduct political activities; most restraints on the media have been removed; and the state of emergency has been lifted throughout South Africa. Action has begun to repeal the legislative pillars of apartheid, with the Separate Amenities Act already disposed of and action planned on the Group Areas Act and Land Acts when Parliament reconvenes after the first of the year.

Most important of all has been the pattern of productive dialogue between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Government. This dialogue led to last August's agreement on procedures for the release of the remaining political prisoners and the return of exiles. This agreement clears the way towards the commencement of negotiations to bring about a constitutional system based on regular and free elections, universal suffrage, equal rights and equal opportunities. There is a large measure of agreement between all sides in South Africa on this fundamntal objective.

These are momentous changes. After meeting President De Klerk at the White House on 24 September and hearing his commitment to ending apartheid and building a new South Africa, President Bush affirmed the United States assessment that the move away from apartheid towards a new political reality is, and must be, irreversible. South Africa still has far to go to realize the dream of its people, and there will certainly be challenges and setbacks along the way. But South Africa has made a profound change of course and has already made significant progress in the right direction. More changes must come, and the process that makes them possible is what we are committed to support.

(Mr. Moore, United States)

The second point I wish to emphasize is that change must occur in a peaceful atmosphere. The emerging democratization process provides a promising framework for peaceful change. We believe that it is incumbent on all groups to engage in the process and to take full advantage of the possibilities it offers for a negotiated transition to a new system. All groups must take the responsibility not only to end violence but to work together to build a democratic, non-racial society and Government in the new South Africa. In a positive move, ANC has suspended the armed struggle in order to concentrate its energies on negotiations. The South African Government has also taken steps in recent months, in response to opposition appeals, to re-establish public order, which was disrupted by violence in August and September. The recent tragic violent outbursts clearly demonstrate how necessary it is for all parties in South Africa to redouble their efforts in fulfilling their responsibility to deter violence that could disrupt the process of peaceful change.

The international community has played an important role, especially in the past year, in promoting the process of peaceful change now under way. The United Nations has made a significant contribution. The landmark consensus Declaration adopted last December at the sixteenth special session, on apartheid, charted a new course for the United Nations. Rather than seeking to punish South Africa for its policy of apartheid, the Declaration gave clear support for a strategy of negotiation to reach the goal of a democratic, non-racial society. The Declaration reaffirmed

> "the right of all peoples, including the people of South Africa, to determine their own destiny and to work out for themselves the institutions and the system of government under which they will, by general consent, live and work together to build a harmonious society ..." (resolution S-16/1, annex, seventh preambular paragraph)

(Mr. Moore, United States)

The Declaration urged the people of South Africa

> "to join together to negotiate an end to the apartheid system and agree on all the measures that are necessary to transform their country into a non-racial democracy." (ibid., para. 2)

The December Declaration and its programme of action was reaffirmed by the consensus resolution of last September. The United Nations can be proud of these achievements for encouraging a viable new course for the dismantling of apartheid, for reaching consensus in doing so, and for contributing to the positive events which have since occurred.

Our task now is to stay abreast of the pace of change in South Africa and make sure that the posture of the international community continues to evolve accordingly. Strong support for continuing progress must be maintained, but our overriding responsibility is to support the internal democratization process.

We believe that it is important for members of the international community to take steps to recognize and encourage the process of change as it proceeds. My country's economic sanctions are based on the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, which explicitly defines the steps which South Africa must take before my Government may consider any relaxation or suspension of sanctions. These requirements have not yet been met, but we are hopeful that they will be met as the process of change continues. We, the international community, must thoughtfully follow developments and keep clearly in view the consequences of our actions. We must be prepared to modify what we do. At times events may call for changes in approach. Our aim is the end of apartheid and the establishment of a non-racial democracy. It is not our purpose to persist with measures which have ceased to be productive and which could lead to the birth of a new South Africa in deep economic

(Mr. Moore, United States)

distress. Such an outcome would not be one in which we could take pride or from which we could derive hope.

The United States wants to achieve consensus on an omnibus resolution on apartheid. We will not, however, join in consensus on a resolution that is not constructive. At this critical juncture the United Nations must encourage rather than castigate. We urge a consensus which reflects current political reality and hope in South Africa. Let us carry the spirit of last December's Declaration with us as we conclude the debate on apartheid at the forty-fifth session.

Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Burkina Faso) (interpretation from French): Since the adoption by consensus of the United Nations Declaration on apartheid a rapid succession of events has led to a relative improvement in the atmosphere in South Africa. The freeing on 11 February 1990 of Nelson Mandela, the legalization of the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), the South African Communist Party and 33 other anti-apartheid organizations, the lifting of the state of emergency and, as explained yesterday by the representative of ANC, the discussions with the Pretoria régime initiated on 2 May 1990 all seem to indicate that the way is now open towards the necessary irreversible transformations.

Then, suddenly, there is this eruption of violence in South Africa, which has cost dozens of lives, at the very time when there seem to be favourable prospects, and the apartheid régime, with its formidable machinery of surveillance and repression, is not able to do anything about it, not being itself responsible for the confrontations.

All this clearly indicates the limits of the process just embarked upon. But this struggle has been going on since the day apartheid was instituted in South

(Mr. Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso)

Africa and it is the constancy and the justice of the struggle that has led to the positive, albeit inadequate, developments that we are witnessing today. It is the continuance of the struggle that will yield the results so long awaited by the people of South Africa and the international community.

We all know that the foundations, the structure and even the practices of the apartheid régime have not changed. In South Africa life is still regulated by what are called the pillars of apartheid: the Population Registration Act, No. 30 of 1950; the Native Land Act, of 1913; the Development Trust and Land Act, of 1936; the Group Areas Act; the Bantu Education Act; and the Republic of South Africa Constitution Act, No. 110 of 1983.

Thus, 13.6 per cent of the country is reserved for the black majority, while 87 per cent of South African land belongs to 5 million whites. We see from the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid that, in such varied areas as industry, education and health, 95 per cent of South African industry belongs to South African whites; the apartheid régime devotes to the education of whites five to six times more resources than it devotes to the education of blacks; the life expectancy of white South Africans is 72 years, while for black South Africans it is 62 years; and the mortality rate for white South African infants is 9 per 1,000, while in the case of blacks it is 124 per 1,000.

(Mr. Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso)

We are familiar with those figures, which show the same imbalances in every area. They reveal the relentless, intolerable reality of apartheid, a phenomenon that makes or breaks the lives of human beings on the basis of the colour of their skin. That reality still exists and continues to wreak havoc.

Nevertheless, we have heard from various quarters suggestions and even recommendations that the economic sanctions against the apartheid régime be lifted, although nothing definite has yet been achieved. Those who experience this reality hour after hour and day after day tell us that sanctions must continue until apartheid has been completely eliminated. We have not yet reached that point.

The United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted by consensus, lists the measures needed to create a climate conducive to negotiations between the South African Government and the authentic representatives of the oppressed majority. In that regard, it should be noted that the apartheid régime has still not lifted all the restrictions on political activities. It has not authorized the return of all political exiles. The same ruthless laws still prevail, even when there is no state of emergency.

We also note a new type of immigration, one that is pernicious and dangerous in view of the fact that a white person in South Africa has the right to keep 25 weapons in his home without a permit. We may wonder whether the new influx of immigrants and weapons is not secretly providing recruits for the security services and whether this practice is not very similar to hiring mercenaries.

What I have said indicates clearly the precarious and fragile nature of the process now under way. Therefore, the pressures against the apartheid régime must be maintained, because they have already yielded some welcome results.

Men have devoted their whole lives to fighting apartheid, and have died without seeing the fruits of their labours. I refer to, among others, the

(Mr. Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso)

President of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), Zephania Mothopeng. Here I wish to repeat to the PAC the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the people of Burkina Faso; condolences go to his comrades and the members of his family.

The struggle continues, and men like the Vice-President of the African National Congress, Nelson Mandela, who personified that anti-apartheid struggle, are pursuing it resolutely. At their side, organized into anti-apartheid movements and parties, are millions of people demanding the dignity due to the human person.

To do justice to the people of South Africa who have experienced the ignominy of apartheid in their bodies and in their minds, and to show the front-line countries that their sacrifices have not been in vain, the full weight of the United Nations must be put into the balance, so that the international community may act in unison to bring about the total elimination of the system of apartheid and the dawn of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa as soon as possible.

At this time of great change and transformation, we at the United Nations can be the instruments of rehabilitation and the self-fulfilment of a human race that has a rendezvous with destiny. Let us work to make that come about.

Mr. WILENSKI (Australia): A year ago the General Assembly met in its sixteenth special session and spoke with a single voice to condemn the continuing injustice of the system of apartheid in South Africa; to call for its total elimination; and to call for the creation of a South Africa transformed into a united, democratic and non-racial country, with justice and security for all its citizens.

Nine months later, just last September, we met again - in a considerably different environment - to take stock and consider progress made in the

(Mr. Wilenski, Australia)

implementation of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, and to reaffirm our commitment to the total eradication of apartheid. At that time we noted that a number of positive developments had taken place and that a distinct possibility had at last been opened up for real change and for the dismantling of the apartheid system. Due recognition was paid to these encouraging developments and the promise, which we sincerely hope will be fulfilled, of a new era.

But at the same time it was clearly noted that we were only at the beginning of a process and not its end; that the progress that had been achieved, which was considerable, was to be welcomed, but did not represent the clear and irreversible change that the international community has demanded in South Africa; and that much more must be done for all the commitments made to be fulfilled, and for the others that must be made to be carried out.

At that time I set out in some detail the views of the Australian Government on the issues before us. Those views remain relevant and unchanged today.

The Australian Government has warmly welcomed the steps being taken inside South Africa, and has praised both Mr. De Klerk and Mr. Mandela and their colleagues for their statesmanship and commitment to change. Indeed, the Australian Prime Minister has written recently to both Mr. De Klerk and Mr. Mandela congratulating them on the progress made so far.

We remain of the view that the process now under way is still at an early stage. Addressing the Australian Parliament on 11 October, the Australian Prime Minister said that the progress made was welcomed, but that we were by no means at the end of the journey; more needed to be done.

(Mr. Wilenski, Australia)

On 13 November the Australian Foreign Minister said in Parliament:

"It is the case that President De Klerk's sincerity seems to be clear and that the commitment to change by him and his senior colleagues may well now be irreversible. But the process of change itself has only just begun, and it is simply too early to state with any confidence that the process of change is irreversible. What has happened to date has essentially been talks about talks, and the clearing away of preliminary obstacles. Substantial negotiations have not begun. ..."

As Mr. de Klerk and Mr. Mandela have pointed out, there are powerful forces opposed to the reform process in South Africa. We also note the potentially disruptive effect that an escalation of violence would have.

It is with this in mind that the Australian Government remains committed to the maintenance of existing measures aimed at continuing to bring pressure on the South African Government to meet its commitments, abolish apartheid and bring about, through negotiations, a new South Africa - a united, non-sexist and non-racial democracy.

Again to quote the Foreign Minister's statement of less than a month ago:

"Australia is not looking to sustain trade sanctions, financial sanctions, or sporting sanctions for a moment longer than they are necessary, but we are determined to maintain them for just so long as they are necessary to ensure that apartheid is destroyed once and for all and that South Africa does at last become a genuine non-racial democracy ... . We will not move unless we are satisfied ... that there is clear evidence of profound and irreversible change."

(Mr. Wilenski, Australia)

We must remember that the process now under way in South Africa remains a fragile one. Despite the commitment of the key parties involved, many problems and obstacles remain ahead. Regrettably, we continue to receive, all too frequently, new reports of violence, which could threaten the considerable progress that has been made so far. In the past 12 months to 30 October 1990, 3,038 people are reported to have died in political violence - almost 10 people a day and three times the rate of the previous year. It is with concern and grief that we have received reports in the past few days of renewed violence resulting in deaths in the reef townships. The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization submitted in September referred to the urgent need for ending the violence to be addressed at the highest level, and warned of the consequences if the violence should continue unrestrained. It is important that the Government of South Africa move immediately to bring under control those renegade elements of the police and security forces who have been involved in or who have instigated much of this recent upsurge of violence.

We welcome both the recent joint call by Mr. De Klerk and Mr. Mandela for all sides to do their utmost to bring the violence to an end and reports that there will soon be a meeting, which will include Mr. Mandela and Mr. Buthelezi, to discuss the problems of the continuing violence in the townships. Every effort must be made to bring an end to the senseless killing.

I have noted our support for the commitments for change that have been made by the Government of South Africa and our support for the progress that has been made so far. Since our meeting in September, the Separate Amenities Act has finally been brought to an end. The Government of South Africa has also reaffirmed its commitment to repeal two more of the old pillars of apartheid - the Land Acts and the Group Areas Act - in the next parliamentary session, which begins in February.

(Mr. Wilenski, Australia)

Some significant movement is also expected with respect to the Internal Security Act.

But as an indication of its good faith and its commitment to change, it is essential that the Government of South Africa follow through and implement fully those undertakings and agreements that it has made so far, and that it do so speedily. We are increasingly hearing concern being expressed at what appears to be the current stalling of discussions between the Government and the African National Congress (ANC). Moreover, there is concern at the lack of progress made in the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles, to which the Government of South Africa has publicly and clearly committed itself. It would be a tragic blow to the process of peaceful change should one side lose its faith and trust in the commitments of the other because of the failure to put fully into place the commitments that have been made.

Despite these problems and the continuing fragility of the reform process, it is not too early for the international community to begin to look to carrying its support beyond the current process. In his recent report, the Secretary-General noted that the distinct possibility has at last been opened up for real change and the dismantling of the apartheid system. The Special Committee's report, which is before us, also makes the same point. The time has come, therefore, with this in mind, for the international community as a whole to start to look forward and help plan in more detail for the post-apartheid future in a new South Africa.

Through the Commonwealth, the Government of Australia is starting to look at ways that assistance might be most usefully given to a post-apartheid South Africa. If the hopes of all South Africans for the future are to be met, we must - while maintaining our full support for the present process - begin to turn more of our attention also to these needs and requirements of the South African people in the future.

Mr. TRAXLER (Italy): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Twelve States members of the European Community.

Our debate is taking place at a crucial time in the history of South Africa. A dynamic process of political change has already been set in motion in that country. In such times of rapid movement, given the magnitude and complexity of the issues involved, it is important not only to measure the distance already covered, but also to get a clear perspective of the road ahead. This gives a special relevance to our present debate.*

Year after year, the Assembly has raised its voice to condemn apartheid, a system of institutionalized racism that violates the fundamental purposes of the Charter of the Organization. I hardly need to stress that segregation and discrimination are the very opposite of the democratic ideals to which all States members of the European Community are committed.

Apartheid has denied the majority of the people of South Africa their most elementary civil, political, economic and social rights, such as the right to vote, the right to choose freely where to live with their families, the right to seek employment in the place of their choice and, ultimately, the right to participate in the political processes affecting their lives. It is a system that has been maintained by repression and that has spawned in turn hatred and violence.

The European Community and its member States have repeatedly expressed their total rejection of apartheid and its associated repressive measures, including the state of emergency, the steps taken against organizations peacefully opposing the system, the Bantustan policy, and all other measures designed to weaken the black majority by dividing it and allocating it to artificial entities.

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* Mr. Makkawi (Lebanon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

The Twelve have firmly and consistently demanded the immediate and total eradication of apartheid through peaceful means, maintaining that the vicious circle of repression and violence can be broken only through constructive dialogue and negotiations.

In pursuit of these goals, the European Community and its member States have adopted an active policy, based on a two-track approach comprising both restrictive and positive measures. They have long worked for profound and irreversible changes, and are employing a combination of pressure and encouragement to promote the dismantling of apartheid. They have undertaken actions to help the victims of apartheid, including political prisoners, and they have implemented substantial collective and national programmes in the humanitarian and social sectors, in training and education and in legal assistance. All these programmes have been carried out with the help of organizations committed to peaceful democratic change in South Africa.

At the same time, the Twelve have expressed their conviction that to isolate South Africa completely from the rest of the world would have been counter-productive and that, in order to exert effective pressure and persuasion, channels of communication must be kept open.

The Twelve are greatly encouraged by the increasing signs that South Africa has reached the threshold of a new era. Three main factors have played a decisive role: the determination and perseverance of the anti-apartheid movements, both within and outside South Africa; the unity of purpose of the international community, illustrated by the Declaration against Apartheid adopted by consensus last December by the General Assembly at its special session; finally, a growing realization inside South Africa, and not least on the part of the Government of South Africa, that a country and a society ravaged by apartheid are doomed, and that radical change is the only way out of a situation of chronic conflict and marginalization.

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

The combined effects of the factors I have just mentioned are producing results that would have seemed far-fetched only one year ago. The European Community and its 12 member States had the opportunity to express, in the course of the debate last September, their assessment of the important developments that had taken place, namely: the unbanning of political organizations; the release of Nelson Mandela and other leaders of the anti-apartheid movement; the substantial lifting of the state of emergency; the beginning of a political dialogue between the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Government; the conclusion of the Pretoria agreements providing for, among other things, the release of political prisoners, the amnesty and the return in a phased manner of exiles; and the identification and repeal of the security laws obstructing free political activity.

The Twelve concluded at that time that

"hopes are running high that the dismantling of apartheid and its replacement by a democratic, united, non-racial society might at last be in prospect."

(A/44/PV.97, p. 48)

Subsequent events, which the Twelve have welcomed, have reinforced this positive perception. The state of emergency has been lifted throughout the country; the party in power has decided to open its ranks to all South Africans; President De Klerk has made clear his acceptance of the concept of universal suffrage and has reiterated the commitment of his Government to repealing the Land Acts and the Group Areas Act in the next parliamentary session; and a number of discriminatory laws have already been repealed, among them the Separate Amenities Act, one of the so-called pillars of apartheid.

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

For its part, the African National Congress has proclaimed the suspension of the armed struggle - an important step in the process of the negotiations towards constitutional reform. The ANC has also clearly stated its readiness to spare no effort to achieve a society based on democracy, justice and peace.

These are neither symbolic nor cosmetic moves; they are real and important developments made possible by the courage and vision of leaders on both sides, who deserve our praise and respect. As a consequence, the political climate in South Africa has changed significantly. As the South African Government and the African National Congress stated in the Pretoria agreements of last August, the way has thus been opened towards negotiations on a new constitution. The Twelve reiterate their appeal to all parties in South Africa to join in the political process and make a full contribution to the establishment of a new, united, democratic, non-racial society in their country.

If we look at what is happening with a sense of perspective there is little doubt that the structure of apartheid is seriously eroding. Of the major pillars of the system, one, the Separate Amenities Act, has already gone; and two more, the Land Acts and the Group Areas Act, are expected to go within the next session of the South African Parliament. The Twelve hope that this will happen at the earliest possible moment and that the other key pillar, the Population Registration Act, will also be repealed in the near future.

Of equal importance is the fact that the frame of mind of the South African people is gearing up for the future. Whether expressed publicly or privately, the prevailing conviction is that a process of genuine transition has started and that there are no valid alternatives. People are looking at and focusing on what will come after the abolition of apartheid. This includes, especially, the problems of how to correct the vast inequalities in the South African society; how to redress the legacy of land dispossession; how to disentangle the distortions

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

that apartheid will leave behind; and what type of democratic constitution will best suit the needs of a new, non-racial South Africa. These are complex issues and certainly it is for us not to dictate solutions but rather to support, through assistance and co-operation, those solutions that the South Africans themselves adopt. Our role is to press for the total dismantling of apartheid so that the South African people may freely determine their own future.

Let there be no mistake, the Twelve are not inclined to easy optimism and do not underestimate the scale of the difficulties that lie ahead. They are fully aware that much remains to be done. The agreements that have been reached have yet to be fully implemented. The Twelve stress the need for a sustained pace in the efforts to secure the release of political prisoners, indemnity for political exiles and the review of the security legislation, in accordance with the timetable agreed upon between the Government and the ANC in the Pretoria Minute.

The completion of the process remains a formidable task. Not only does the institutional machinery of apartheid have to be entirely removed, but the legacy of the past, both material and psychological, has to be overcome. Resistance to change, social imbalances, divisions and tensions stemming from the system - the unhappy heritage of fear and frustration - are all adverse factors. The European Community and its 12 member States recognize that a new post-apartheid South Africa should be able to avail itself of all the economic resources, including access to external finance, necessary to ensure its future prosperity and the full development of all its people. South Africa faces acute socio-economic problems, especially in the areas of employment, education and housing, against a background of a high rate of population growth. These problems have been greatly exacerbated by apartheid and positive action will be needed to rectify imbalances.

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

The risk of recurring violence has to be constantly kept in check, for it has the potential of seriously jeopardizing the process. It is incumbent on all parties to address thie crucial problem. In this respect, the Government has the major responsibility for maintaining order and protecting the safety of all citizens. It is its duty to ensure that the security forces operate in an impartial manner and that their conduct be fully consistent with the commitments undertaken by the Government and responsive to the need to restore the sense of security and confidence of the public. The Twelve call on all parties to work actively to prevent violence and strengthen the process of national reconciliation at all levels.

The Twelve feel that, at this important juncture in the history of South Africa, the Assembly should take into account the positive developments that have occurred in the country and send a signal of encouragement and hope, a signal that may strengthen confidence among South Africans in their common future and their determination to move towards the building of a new society based on freedom and dignity for all. The Twelve will spare no efforts to contribute to the attainment of this goal. The European Community and its twelve member States look forward to the time when a new, free and democratic South Africa, without racial discrimination, will be in a position to realize its considerable potential for economic and social progress within the country, in the region of southern Africa and in the wider community of nations.

Mr. KHARRAZI (Islamic Republic of Iran): Since 1948, when the apartheid system was institutionalized in South Africa, the racist policies of the South African régime have been closely studied by the United Nations. Through the Special Committee against Apartheid, which was established in 1962, the United Nations has paid special attention to the apartheid policies of South Africa. The issue has been on the agenda of the General Assembly consistently, and numerous resolutions expressing total condemnation of the evil system of apartheid have been submitted, adopted and reaffirmed by the entire international community.

The adoption by consensus, on 14 December 1989, of the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa is the most recent proof of the international resolve to eradicate apartheid. Today, more than ever before, the world is set for the elimination of violence and racism. Truly, as last year's Declaration points out,

> "... permanent peace and stability in southern Africa can only be achieved when the system of apartheid in South Africa has been eradicated and South Africa has been transformed into a united, democratic and non-racial country". (resolution S-16/1, fifth preambular paragraph)

The recent developments in South Africa strengthen the hope that it will be possible to eliminate the apartheid system peacefully. An apartheid-free South Africa, however, is still very far out of reach. The Government of South Africa must undertake a series of measures to create a climate conducive to negotiations. It must release all political prisoners unconditionally and refrain from imposing any restrictions on them; lift the bans and restrictions on all anti-apartheid political groups and individuals; remove all its troops from the townships; end the state of emergency and repeal all legislation, such as the Internal Security Act,

(Mr. Kharrazi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

designed to circumscribe political activity; and cease all political trials and political executions.

A number of positive developments - in particular, the lifting of the ban on political-opposition organizations; the release of some political prisoners, including Mr. Nelson Mandela; and the talks with the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) - have contributed towards removing some of the obstacles to negotiations. While the positive developments in South Africa should be acknowledged and welcomed, it should equally be understood that unless all instruments of apartheid are abolished, and unless the fundamental national and human rights of all South Africans, regardless of colour or race, are recognized and implemented, international sanctions against South Africa must remain in force.

The continuing brutality of the security forces of the Pretoria régime against the black majority in South Africa is an important factor in preventing previously banned organizations from rebuilding their structures effectively, and it impedes the development of democratic debate and negotiations on a future constitution.

Brutality and violence are still widespread in South Africa. Anti-apartheid activists are still being arrested and detained, and many of them die while in detention or in police custody. So long as these manifestations of violence and insecurity persist, the anti-apartheid groups and associations will be unable to rebuild effective structures with a view to creating a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

Despite the General Assembly's consensus resolution 44/244 and the lifting, in September, of the state of emergency in Natal, the South African authorities have

(Mr. Kharrazi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

not taken any significant action. The South African régime should understand that the continuing violence and the killing of people by the police force is unacceptable and is entirely contrary to the trend towards breaking down racial barriers and creating a united and democratic South Africa. Mr. Nelson Mandela has warned:

"If the South African Government fails to take action against the violence, the whole of South Africa will be drowned in blood."

Implementation of the Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its sixteenth special session is of particular importance in the process of terminating apartheid rule in South Africa. The Declaration makes it clear that the sanctions against that régime should be retained as a major element of policy and that implementation should be monitored thoroughly.

With a view to contributing to the elimination of the inhuman apartheid policies, the Islamic Republic of Iran has consistently sponsored General Assembly resolutions against the racist policies of South Africa. In close co-operation with the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa, my country strives to strengthen implementation of the ban on the sale and shipment of oil and other petroleum products to South Africa. To guarantee full implementation of this boycott the Islamic Republic of Iran has made it compulsory for those purchasing its oil to present discharge certificates. Furthermore, the Islamic Consultative Assembly has ratified the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports. It presented the instruments of accession to the United Nations Secretary-General on 12 January 1988.

The Special Committee against Apartheid, in its latest report, refers to the fact that, contrary to United Nations resolutions against the policy of apartheid and related military activities - I refer representatives to General Assembly

(Mr. Kharrazi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

resolution 44/27 F and to documents A/45/681 and A/45/682, in which collaboration between Israel and South Africa is condemned - there has been extensive collaboration, particularly in the military and nuclear fields, between these two racist régimes. It is clear that such collaboration is a major impediment to the elimination of apartheid. Blatant indifference with regard to this issue is a major obstacle to the eradication of apartheid and its destructive consequences.

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that with concerted action, taking into account the new international atmosphere, the abhorrent system of apartheid can be dismantled. Indeed, it must be dismantled. This is the least that the international community can do to alleviate the suffering of the oppressed people of South Africa. As always, the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to work towards that end.

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): The General Assembly meets today to discuss the policy of apartheid, which the Government of South Africa still pursues. This is an issue which the General Assembly has continued to discuss since 1946. As far back as that date, the world community had decided and continued to reiterate its determination to rid itself of that illegitimate immoral system which proved to be a complete failure both economically and socially.

It is fortunate that certain influential forces within the white South African minority have come to realize that this is a failed policy and that apartheid was not only a mistake but also a sin that should be confessed and atoned for.

The fact that Egypt's continued interest in putting an end to the policy of apartheid in South Africa has acquired a high priority stems not only from Egypt's belongingness to Africa but also from Egypt's belief in the justice of the demands and rights of the South African people and its interest that that people should be enabled to govern its own country and make a full contribution to its economic and social development.

It is high time that the expression "policies of apartheid" were deleted from international contemporary political terminology as it runs counter to every norm and convention and is an anomaly in a world order that can no longer tolerate such racist policies or accept the idea that any minority, no matter how technologically advanced and internationally well connected it may be, should subjugate the majority by force and deprive it of the right to participate in charting the course of its country.

An objective view of the situation today in comparison with what it was only a year ago gives us cause for some hope that the situation is improving, although I must also say that the road to our goal is still long and arduous.

The world is unanimous on the need to eradicate the system of apartheid through a political settlement that would lead to the establishment of a new

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

constitutional order in which South Africa would become a united, democratic and non-racialist State. That would allow full participation by the people of South Africa in governing the country without discrimination through the granting of universal suffrage based on equality, majority rule and the secret ballot.

The adoption on 16 December last year by the General Assembly of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa provided the cornerstone of any discussion of this issue. The General Assembly continued its consideration last September when it followed the progress made in the implementation of the Declaration and arrived at a consensus which emphasized the need for South Africa to take further measures to bring about the deep and irreversible changes called for in the Declaration and the need for the international community to keep in place the existing measures aimed at forcing the South African régime to desist from the practice of apartheid until such a time as there is conclusive proof that those irreversible changes have been brought about and that the system of apartheid has ended.

While we welcome the talks between the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and the South African Government towards facilitating the substantive negotiations between them, we also commend the initiative of the ANC in suspending armed struggle in the light of present circumstances.

We believe it is important not to ignore a number of positive steps which have been taken by the Pretoria régime as we consider that they constitute movement in the right direction. Indeed, they have led to the initiation of negotiations. Some of the most important of those steps was the unbanning of nationalist movements; the release of some political detainees, foremost among whom was Nelson Mandela; the suspension of some discriminatory laws, and the lifting of the state of emergency.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

However, an objective evaluation of the current situation tends to infuse our optimism with caution. The principal pillars and the very philosophy of apartheid are still in place. Not all of the political detainees have been released; the Internal Security Act is still in force; the exiles have not returned to their country and the talks concerning negotiations have not yet led to substantive negotiations concerning the means of dismantling apartheid.

We realize that the end result of the philosophy and practice of apartheid over many decades has become a way of life for certain circles, and that it may take some time to get rid of them peacefully and definitively. However, the momentum realized at the beginning of this year should continue at a much higher level. In this connection, Egypt urged the international community not to relax the existing measures until the truly deep and irreversible changes after which we aspire have taken place.

We look to the future with a sense of cautious optimism. We could not have done so a year ago. We hope that the coming weeks and months will witness truly significant constitutional changes that will put an end to the system of apartheid and pave the way to a democratic society free from colour and race discrimination.

The African continent has suffered for centuries from the phenomenon of colonialism and exploitation. Over the few past decades, it has experienced the added suffering brought about by the problems of development, desertification and drought. There is no doubt that it is illogical and unacceptable that the continent and the world should move towards the third millennium with Africa still fettered with racial practices.

It is the right of the international community to look forward to the triumph of reason and objectivity and to hope for the emergence of a strong South African State in which justice and equality would prevail. That would be the beginning of a very significant transformation to the better for the continent and would herald

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

the emergence of a world free of discrimination and capable of implementing the principles of respect for human rights and development of human potential.

The change in the tone and level of dialogue between certain capitals and the Pretoria Government and the varying degrees of awareness of the process of change in the system of racial discrimination is, in our opinion, a clear message to the effect that there is an urgent need to bolster the steps taken by Mr. De Klerk with further steps in order to deepen the changes.

Moreover, the impressive reception of Nelson Mandela and the respect and support extended to him in various capitals of the world are clear messages from the international community to Pretoria that the era of the suppression of the majority is over and that it is time to begin substantive negotiations towards drafting a new constitution in which there will be no place for discrimination.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

There is no doubt that internal peace and security in South Africa are indispensable prerequisites for the creation of a suitable and healthy climate for the constitutional negotiations that we hope will begin in a few weeks time. The international community pins great hopes on the success of those negotiaitons to put an end to apartheid once for all. Therefore, it is a source of deep concern to us that a wave of violence should break out between the sons of one people and that that violence should escalate to the extent of posing a real threat to the process that has just begun and thereby jeopardize the next critical phase.

Egypt, from this rostrum, joins in the international call on all parties in South Africa to put an immediate end to the violence. While we call on those parties to rise to the level of their historical responsibility and respect their obligations towards internal peace, security and national unity, we call on the Government of Pretoria to shoulder its responsibilities in this regard as well. The Government is called upon to keep law and order and uphold the law.

In conclusion, I wish to express our appreciation to the Special Committee against Apartheid, chaired by Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, the Ambassador of Nigeria, for its commendable efforts over the past years and for its dedication to the noble mission of informing world public opinion concerning the inhuman aspects of apartheid, and their effect on South Africa.

Mr. HAYES (Ireland): My delegation associates itself fully with the views expressed in this debate some minutes ago by the Ambassador of Italy on behalf of the twelve States members of the European Community. This debate is taking place at a time of transition and change in South Africa. In this Assembly we have said for many years that the abolition of apartheid by peaceful means is truly possible and can be achieved. We have stated that the dismantlement of a system founded on oppression and intimidation can be the common achievement of all South Africans.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

Today there is real hope that the fabric of a country and a society long torn by apartheid will be repaired. There remains a long journey ahead but movement is now clearly in the right direction.

Ireland has always condemned apartheid as an evil system built on prejudice and fear and nurtured by violence. It destroys the bonding at the heart of a community and replaces it with suspicion and fear. A society sustained by violence breeds more violence and sacrifices the sense of responsibility and mutual trust between its members that are essential to its cohesion and even to its viability. Apartheid is thus not just an affront to the values of any civilized society; it undermines and destoys that society.

To state these basic truths once again is not to lack awareness of what has been achieved in South Africa since the United Nations adopted the Declaration on Apartheid just one year ago. Rather, the extent of the achievement so far is measured by reference to how much more remains to be done. It is not possible to ignore or forget the point from which the people of South Africa must now start to build a new society based on equality, trust and freedom from fear and violence.

The changes in the political climate of South Africa over the past year are real and owe much to the courage and vision of President De Klerk and his Government and of Mr. Mandela and the African National Congress. Following the Pretoria agreements of last August, the state of emergency has now been lifted throughout the country and the Government is committed to repealing two of the pillars of apartheid - the Land Acts and the Group Areas Act - in the next parliamentary session. The Separate Amenities Act has already been abolished. We look forward to the further essential legislative step, the repeal of the Population Registration Act, in the near future.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

The African National Congress has acted with wisdom and moderation in its response to the events of the past year. It has announced suspension of the armed struggle and has stated its willingness and readiness to negotiate the constitutional order for a new South Africa. It demonstrated in full measure courage and generosity in transcending years of violent oppression and in entering into a dialogue, although unsure that the outcome would be satisfactory. Indeed, we ourselves cannot yet be sure of that outcome, although our hopes are high that the Government will also continue to demonstrate the necessary courage and steadfastness.

The political dialogue between the Government and the African National Congress has paved the way for real negotiations on the principles of a new constitution for a new South Africa. The task ahead is clear: the complete abolition of apartheid. There are still steps to be taken to realize fully the climate in which negotiations to this end would take place. It is essential to have early implementation of the agreements already reached on the definition of "political prisoner" and the release of all political prisoners now held and on the return of South African exiles from abroad. We also look to the early repeal of security laws, whose continued application impedes full freedom for political activity.

These commitments and their implementation would enable substantive negotiations on the future of South Africa to take place. It is important to appreciate - and let there be no doubt about this - what the final objective of these negotiations must be: agreement on a new constitutional order for a new, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

If the international community has reacted cautiously so far, it is not without reason. We are faced with an extremely complex and difficult situation, one which requires the continuous assessment of the significance of developments

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

and of the implementation of the commitments entered into. It is not simply a question of adding up events or measures implemented; it also requires an assessment of the overall political climate and of the best way in which to continue to promote movement towards our ultimate goal.

We acknowledge what has already been achieved and we recognize the courage this has required on the part of both the Government and the African National Congress. We believe this bodes well for the realization of further undertakings. At the same time, it would be unwise to underestimate the difficulties still to be confronted in negotiations, the objective of which is not merely to end apartheid but to achieve agreement on an entirely new constitutional structure for South Africa based on general principles of justice and equality for all its citizens. In the view of my delegation a prudent and supportive approach on the part of all friends of fundamental change in South Africa is the best way of helping to achieve that goal.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

The legacy of the past presents the people of South Africa with formidable problems and challenges. We have already seen, since the political process began, horrifying outbreaks of violence that have again increased the people's burden of suffering. The recurrent nature of these outbreaks seriously jeopardizes the prospects for a peaceful progression towards the new South Africa. The Government has the responsibility of maintaining order and protecting all citizens and must ensure that the security services act at all times in a fully impartial manner. All in South Africa must work to prevent violence and to avoid the suffering it brings and the chaos that follows in its wake. We therefore strongly urge all parties in South Africa to put an end to violence and to join in the political process.

It remains of primary importance to provide humanitarian assistance to the innocent victims of apartheid, both inside and outside South Africa. Ireland continues to support the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa and the United Nations Educational and Training Programme. We support also the valuable efforts of a number of non-governmental organizations in their work for those who have suffered from apartheid. We participate in the work of the South African Development Co-ordination Conference. We view as a challenge of particular importance the need for the international community to assist those countries in southern Africa that have in the past suffered from South African aggression and are subject to economic dependence and deprivation.

This debate takes place at a time of great hope. Courage and statesmanship are being shown by both sides on the path towards peacefully ending apartheid and building a non-racial and democratic society. We urge all in South Africa to give encouragement and support to their efforts. The process under way deserves the unstinting support of the international community until the goal which we all have in common, and for which we have so long yearned, is at last attained.

Miss AL-MULLA (Kuwait): The ties that bind a person to his homeland are far stronger than any policy measure designed to unbind them. Earth, the soil of one's home, is the gravitational power that attracts an individual to a place.

No act, no legislation can wipe out these ties. Whenever attempts are made to strip a people of its identity or to sever its ties to its home, a spontaneous reaction is set in motion. And in South Africa, measures of Draconian magnitude have been imposed on the black majority. For over four decades a minority has systematically subjected the black majority to a life of deprivation and, in certain instances, to the deprivation of life. The ties of a black person to his land have been thwarted by measures and policies. A majority has been deprived of the opportunity to partake in the goodness of its land. A racist system, the apartheid system, has to be eradicated. It cannot simply be modified. All the tenets of the régime have to be rejected.

In our changing world, a post-cold-war world, South Africa cannot be kept out of the mainstream of change. There have indeed been positive developments: the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, the lifting of the state of emergency and the lifting of the ban on the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) and other organizations. However, other pillars of apartheid are still intact. True, agreements have been reached to repeal repressive legislation, but those agreements, as Mr. Mbeki said yesterday, have yet to be implemented.

The rejection and eradication of the apartheid system is a process that demands concerted effort and diligence. No one is alert to that fact more than the black majority of South Africa. Its leadership is pursuing the path of negotiation with patience and resilience. The obstacles they face cannot be underestimated. On their own, they may effect some changes in a system long abhorred by all mankind. Together with the rest of the international community, they should be able to alter the situation. The international community, in its Declaration on

(Miss Al-Mulla, Kuwait)

Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, has made a historic contribution to the process of change towards a non-racial democracy. The adoption of the Declaration is not an isolated case. The international community will have to maintain the pressure on South Africa by all possible means. Sanctions remain a vital aspect of maintaining that pressure. Sanctions should not only be maintained, but also effectively enforced.

Short of selective mandatory sanctions, Kuwait believes that concerted efforts by the majority of the international community are one peaceful means to be employed in the struggle against apartheid. Such efforts, in our experience, have proved to be feasible. I am referring to the role of the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa. Only four years of its activity have underlined the importance of co-operation between States in the successful implementation of common policies. Mandated by the General Assembly to monitor the supply and shipping of oil and petroleum products to South Africa, the Group has proved to be an asset in strengthening the oil embargo. Through its major activity of investigating reports of alleged oil shipments and port calls to South Africa, the Group is co-ordinating the efforts of suppliers, shippers and handlers to enforce the embargo.

For its part, Kuwait has always maintained that for an embargo by oil-exporting States to be effective, it should be enhanced by the efforts of shipping States as well as handling States. The vigilence of all these parties is necessary to enforce the embargo. The Intergovernmental Group is instrumental in co-ordinating such efforts. Kuwait is gratified that it could contribute to the work of the Group, under the able and wise chairmanship of Ambassador Nayaki of Tanzania.*

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* The President returned to the Chair.

(Miss Al-Mulla, Kuwait)

While intimately involved with the work of the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa, Kuwait recognizes the invaluable role of the Special Committee against Apartheid in mobilizing public opinion and in promoting the international campaign against apartheid. Kuwait expresses its gratitude to its Chairman, Ambassador Gambari of Nigeria, and to the other members of the Special Committee. Appreciation and gratitude are also due to the secretariat of the Centre against Apartheid for all the assistance they are extending in the struggle against apartheid.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

I now call on the representative of Kuwait, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention, and to five minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. AL-FEHAID (Kuwait): The reference the Israeli delegation made yesterday to the question of the oil embargo lacks both accuracy and sincerity. It alleges that most of South Africa's oil imports come from Arab countries and that this percentage is constantly increasing. They base their claim on studies made by the Shipping Research Bureau.

The last time the Israeli delegation published a report on the subject, the Shipping Research Bureau found fault with it. The Israeli delegation might explain to the Assembly why the Bureau concluded that the report "shows a large number of misrepresentations and inaccuracies".

(Mr. AL-Fehaid, Kuwait)

Furthermore, a quote by a Norwegian official is inserted between references to the Shipping Research Bureau's report, in order to give credence to the Israeli allegations. The Israeli delegation quotes Mr. Froysnes, purportedly Norway's Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1985, in a statement he made before the Norwegian Parliament. Mr. Froysnes has never been a Minister. The post he held at the time was State Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Furthermore, his post does not entitle him to address the Parliament. But if the Israeli delegation is intent on the Assembly being informed about the oil industry and South Africa's ability to obtain crude oil and petroleum products, I shall have to quote a genuine Minister for Foreign Affairs, the late Mr. Knut Frydenlund, who stated the following:

> "There is one major difference between the producer-exporter link of the chain and the transporter link. Whereas most major oil-exporting countries have declared their support for the oil embargo against South Africa, very few major shipping nations have done so."

The PRESIDENT: Action on draft resolution A/45/L.31, as well as other draft resolutions to be submitted under agenda item 34, will be taken at a later date to be announced.

AGENDA ITEM 23 (continued)

QUESTION OF PALESTINE

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE (A/45/35 and Corr.1)

(b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/45/709)

(c) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/45/L.24 to A/45/L.28)

The PRESIDENT: May I remind representatives that the debate on this item was concluded at the 53rd plenary meeting, held on Monday, 3 December.

We shall now turn to the consideration of draft resolutions A/45/L.24 to A/45/L.28.

(The President)

I call on Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo of Senegal, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, who wishes to introduce the five draft resolutions.

Mrs. DIALLO (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (interpretation from French): I should like to thank you, Sir, for once again giving me the opportunity to speak before the General Assembly in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. On behalf of the Committee I have the honour to introduce draft resolutions A/45/L.24 to A/45/L.28.

I am pleased to announce that other delegations have joined the sponsors of these draft resolutions. Cuba and the Lao People's Democratic Republic have joined the sponsors of all five draft resolutions; Morocco, the sponsors of draft resolutions A/45/L.24 to A/45/L.26 and A/45/L.28; Malta, the sponsors of A/45/L.27 and A/45/L.28; and Mongolia, the sponsors of draft resolutions A/45/L.24 and A/45/L.27.

The first three of the draft resolutions - A/45/L.24 to A/45/L.26 - are essentially the same as those submitted in previous years with a view to enabling the Committee, the Division on Palestinian Rights and the Department of Information to implement their work programme under the programme budget established for the biennium 1990-1991.

Under draft resolution A/45/L.24 the Assembly would endorse the recommendations of the Committee contained in its report and request the Committee to continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine and report and make suggestions to the General Assembly or the Security Council, as appropriate.

(Mrs. Diallo, Chairman, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People)

The Assembly would authorize the Committee to continue to exert all efforts to promote the implementation of its recommendations and to carry out its programme of seminars, symposia and meetings for non-governmental organizations by giving special emphasis to the need to mobilize public opinion in Europe and North America and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

(Mrs. Diallo, Chairman, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People)

The Committee is requested to continue its assistance to non-governmental organizations and to take appropriate steps to strengthen its co-operation with those organizations. In the same draft resolution the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine and other bodies associated with the question of Palestine are requested to co-operate fully with the Committee.

In draft resolution A/45/L.25 the role of the Secretariat is specifically addressed. The General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to provide to the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat the necessary resources to ensure that it continue to discharge the tasks detailed in resolutions adopted in the past, including the organization of seminars, meetings and symposiums of non-governmental organizations, and the preparation of studies and information material. The Assembly would invite all Governments and organizations to lend their co-operation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights in the performance of their task.

Draft resolution A/45/L.26, concerns the role of the Department of Public Information in the disseminating of accurate and comprehensive information on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The Assembly would request the Department of Public Information, in full co-operation with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to continue its special information programme on the question of Palestine, with particular emphasis on public opinion in Europe and North America. It would request the Department of Public Information, in particular, to disseminate information on all the activities of the United Nations system relating to the question of Palestine,

(Mrs. Diallo, Chairman, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People)

to continue to issue and update publications on the various aspects of the question of Palestine, to expand its audio-visual material, to organize and promote for journalists fact-finding news missions to the area, including to the occupied territories, and, finally, to organize symposiums for journalists.

On behalf of the Committee, I take this opportunity to express once again to the Department of Public Information our gratitude for the support it has always given us in our efforts to attain our objectives.

Draft resolution A/45/L.27 relates to the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is firmly convinced that the Conference is the most appropriate and timely means of achieving a just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine. That conviction has been strengthened by events this year and by the overwhelming consensus in favour of the convening of the Conference that emerged in connection with various activities organized under the auspices of the Committee.

The draft resolution before the Assembly is largely a repetition of resolution 44/42, of 6 December 1989, which obtained the virtually unanimous support of the members of the Assembly. In operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/45/L.27, the Assembly would call for continued and increased efforts to ensure the convening of the Conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, on an equal footing, and the five permanent members of the Security Council, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination.

(Mrs. Diallo, Chairman, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People)

In paragraph 3 the Assembly would reaffirm the principles for the achievement of comprehensive peace, which are: the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and from the other occupied Arab territories; arrangements guaranteeing the security of all States in the region, including those named in resolution 181 (III), of 29 November 1947, within secure and internationally recognized boundaries; resolution of the problem of the Palestine refugees in conformity with General Assembly resolution 194 (III), of 11 December 1948, and subsequent relevant resolutions; the dismantling of the Israeli settlements in the territories occupied since 1967; and, finally, the guaranteeing of freedom of access to Holy Places and religious buildings and sites.

In paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 of the draft resolution the Assembly would take note of the expressed desires and endeavours to place the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, under the supervision of the United Nations for a limited period, as part of the peace process. It would once again invite the Security Council to consider necessary measures needed to convene the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, including the establishment of a preparatory committee, and to consider means of guaranteeing security measures agreed upon by the Conference for all States in the region. It would request the Secretary-General to continue his efforts with the parties concerned, and in consultation with the Security Council, to facilitate the convening of the Conference, and to submit progress reports on developments in this matter.

As members will note, and as in the case of similar texts in the past, the draft resolution is characterized by moderation and objectivity. By adopting it the Assembly would make a positive and constructive contribution to the restoration

(Mrs. Diallo, Chairman, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People)

of peace, stability and security in the Middle East, enabling the Palestinian people to advance towards the restoration of their inalienable, legitimate rights.

I also have the honour of introducing draft resolution A/45/L.28, entitled "The uprising (intifadah) of the Palestinian people". In this connection, I wish to indicate a change in the fourth preambular paragraph, which should read as follows:

> "Expressing its profound shock at the continued measures by Israel, the occupying Power, including the killing and wounding of Palestinian civilians, and at the recent acts of violence committed by the Israeli security forces, which took place on 8 October 1990 at the Al-Haram Al-Shareef in Jerusalem, resulting in injuries and loss of human lives."

The Assembly will note that it is the last part of the preambular paragraph that has been changed. As everyone knows, in the three years since the beginning of the intifadah at least 893 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli occupation forces, one fourth of the victims being children under the age of 16.

By draft resolution A/45/L.28 the Assembly would condemn the policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, which violates the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem. It would demand that Israel abide scrupulously by the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, and call upon all the high contracting parties to the Convention to ensure respect by Israel for the Convention. It would strongly deplore the continuing disregard by Israel of the relevant decisions of the Security Council and reaffirm that the occupation by Israel since 1967 of Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and of other Arab territories in no way changes the legal status of those territories.

(Mrs. Diallo, Chairman, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People)

The Assembly would, in draft resolution A/45/L.28, request the Security Council to examine with urgency the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories with a view to considering measures needed to provide international protection to Palestinian civilians. Finally, it would appeal to the international community for increased support for the Palestinian people, and request the Secretary-General to submit periodic reports on the situation in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem.

(Mrs. Diallo, Chairman, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People)

A real determination to contribute to ensuring the protection of the Palestinian people, putting an end to violence and repression and advancing towards a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine motivated those who prepared the five draft resolutions I have just introduced.

On behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and on behalf of all the sponsors, I invite all delegations to show the same determination and once again to express their solidarity with the Palestinian people by voting overwhelmingly in favour of draft resolutions A/45/L.24, A/45/L.25, A/45/L.26, A/45/L.27, and A/45/L.28.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take decisions on the draft resolutions before it.

We shall begin the voting process by taking a decision on draft resolution A/45/L.24.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominica, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/45/L.24 was adopted by 122 votes to 2, with 23 abstentions (resolution 45/67 A).*

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/45/L.25.

A recorded vote has been requested.

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* Subsequently, the delegations of Saint Lucia and Vanuatu advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/45/L.25 was adopted by 121 votes to 2, with 22 abstentions (resolution 45/67 B).*

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/45/L.26.

A recorded vote has been requested.

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* Subsequently, the delegations of Jordan, Saint Lucia and Vanuatu advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominica, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/45/L.26 was adopted by 124 votes to 2, with 20 abstentions (resolution 45/67 C).*

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/45/L.27.

A recorded vote has been requested.

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* Subsequently, the delegations of Saint Lucia and Vanuatu advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Draft resolution A/45/L.27 was adopted by 144 votes to 2 (resolution 45/68).*

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/45/L.28, as orally revised.

A recorded vote has been requested.

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* Subsequently, the delegations of Saint Lucia and Vanuatu advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Costa Rica, Dominica, Honduras

Draft resolution A/45/L.28, as orally revised, was adopted by 141 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions (resolution 45/69).*

The PRESIDENT: I shall now call on representatives who wish to make statements in explanation of vote.

I would remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

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* Subsequently, the delegations of Saint Lucia and Vanuatu advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

Mr. KHANI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): The Syrian Arab Republic's vote on draft resolution A/45/L.27 of 30 November 1990 does not mean recognition of Israel, which does not recognize the national rights of the Palestinian people and which still occupies the Arab Syrian Golan and Arab territories, in violation of United Nations resolutions and the demands of international legitimacy.

Mr. van SCHAIK (Netherlands): The Netherlands voted in favour of draft resolution A/45/L.27 because we support the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East. A well-structured conference held at the right moment can indeed provide a suitable forum for the necessary negotiations between the parties most directly involved. In order for the process of negotiations successfully to lead to a lasting and comprehensive peace settlement, the Netherlands regards it as an essential preliminary requirement that a direct dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians be established.

(Mr. Van Schaik, Netherlands)

The Netherlands hopes that Israel and the Palestinians will both work towards establishing the right conditions for such a direct dialogue.

The Netherlands has certain reservations about the wording of the draft resolution, notably where it pronounces on issues that should be addressed, and can only be resolved, in negotiations proper. This concerns, among other things, the issue of secure and precise borders and the question of how to resolve the refugee problem.

The question of settlements, which we have always considered to be illegal, will also have to be addressed in the negotiations.

The nature of possible transitional arrangements is another matter that would require prior agreement between the parties directly concerned.

All these issues, including the vital question of the implementation of the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people, require a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement, which can be achieved only through negotiations. We feel that such should be the process of negotiations in order to promote the settlement of a burning issue that has remained unresolved for so long.

Ms. THOMSEN (Canada): My delegation would like to record that we understand the terms used in draft resolutions A/45/L.27 and A/45/L.28, "the Palestinian territory" and "the occupied Palestinian territory" refer to the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, which have been under Israeli occupation since 1967.

Canada's vote in favour of those draft resolutions does not signify a change in my Government's view on the status of those territories.

Ms. BIRD (Australia): Australia voted in favour of the draft resolution (A/45/L.28) on the uprising of the Palestinian people because it is consistent with the concern we have long expressed over the continued violence in the territories and the violations of human rights which have resulted from Israeli measures taken against the intifadah.

(Ms. Bird, Australia)

Australia has consistently taken the position that the General Assembly, in the wording of its resolutions, should avoid provocative language which exacerbates differences and hinders peace-making, rather than constructively advancing it, and there are aspects of this draft resolution which are less balanced than they might be in this respect.

The situation in the occupied territories requires an approach that seeks accommodation and an end of violence from all quarters. An understanding of the situation in the occupied territories requires not only an appreciation of the legitimate claims of the Palestinian people to self-determination, but recognition of the historical situation in which Israel has found itself from its original establishment by a decision of this Organization, of the pattern of conflict continuing over a period of 41 years, and of the concern it has for its own security and survival so long as its right to exist within secure and recognized boundaries is not universally accepted.

The great difficulty Israel faces in dealing with the situation in the occupied territories serves to reinforce the urgent need for a comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli dispute, a settlement which ensures Israel's right to exist within secure and recognized borders as well as the rights of the Palestinian people. We consider that such a settlement is best served by balanced and non-provocative resolutions of the Assembly which reflect and constructively promote this objective.

Mr. SHAHABI (Islamic Republic of Iran): We voted in favour of all the draft resolutions adopted tonight regarding the question of Palestine. Nevertheless, my delegation would like to express its strong reservations about those paragraphs that, either explicity or implicitly, render recognition to the Zionist régime.

Mr. LICHEM (Austria): Austria has repeatedly had the opportunity to explain its position on the question of Palestine. Our position, which is well known and has been consistent over the years, is the reason why we abstained, as in previous years on similar draft resolutions, in the voting on draft resolutions A/45/L.24 and A/45/L.25.

In view of the valuable activities carried out by the Department of Public Information with regard to the question of Palestine, Austria voted in favour of draft resolution A/45/L.26.

Due to its longstanding commitment to the early convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, as well as its concern for the conditions in the occupied territories, Austria, as in the past on similar draft resolutions, also voted in favour of draft resolutions A/45/L.27 and A/45/L.28.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX), of 22 November 1974, and resolution 43/177, of 15 December 1988, I now call on the Observer of Palestine.

Mr. AL-KIDWA (Palestine) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the delegation of the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine, I should like to thank the Assembly for adopting the five resolutions on the question of Palestine with such a large majority. In particular, I wish to express the appreciation of the people of Palestine, wherever they may be - whether in the Palestinian territories, including Al-Quds which has been occupied since 1967, or outside them in the diaspora - to all the Member States that voted for the resolutions. They thus expressed solidarity with the just struggle of our people and support for the just Palestinian cause.

In adopting the first three resolutions, the Assembly signalled the importance of the mechanisms through which the United Nations works on the question of

(Mr. Al-Kidwa, Palestine)

Palestine: the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Department of Public Information. In draft resolution A/45/L.28, the Assembly also took a clear stand vis-à-vis our people's intifadah.

The most important feature of the voting today was the Assembly's adoption for the third consecutive time of a clear resolution on the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

(Mr. Al-Kidwa, Palestine)

All Members of the United Nations voted in favour of this resolution, with the exception of Israel, supported in this by another Member, the United States of America. By voting on this resolution the Assembly made it clear that it is on the side of the peace option, the coexistence option and the justice option; on the side of the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among which is its right to self-determination. On the other hand, Israel expressed its rejection of this logic, its rejection of international legality and its rejection of peace in the Middle East region. We hope to see a change in the position of the United States in the years to come, which would lead inevitably to a change in the position of the Israeli Government.

I would like to point out that we in the delegation of the Permanent Observer of Palestine have tried, over the past few years in the course of a long-drawn-out process of arduous negotiations with everybody, to take into consideration all remarks, reservations and points of view, because we have always aimed, and continue to aim, at achieving international unanimity on the question of Palestine, which is a just cause, the cause of the international community and of the United Nations. This is what we shall try to do in the future, and this gives us cause for hope that the Organization will maintain its support until the day dawns when the aspiration of the Palestinian people to the establishment of its own State will be fulfilled.

The PRESIDENT: I have to draw to the attention of the Assembly a matter relating to the membership of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. In this regard, members will recall that, by letter (A/45/567), dated 3 October 1990, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany informed the Secretary-General that, through the accession of the German Democratic Republic to the Federal Republic of Germany

(The President)

with effect from 3 October 1990, the two German States had united to form one sovereign State.

Consequently, the seat that had been occupied by the former German Democratic Republic in the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People became vacant as at 3 October 1990.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX), adopted on 10 November 1975, the members of this Committee are appointed by the General Assembly.

Following consultations with the regional groups, it has been agreed that the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic should be appointed to fill this vacancy.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly appoints the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic a member of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, with immediate effect?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.